REFUGEE SUNDAY

A day to learn, pray, and act to support refugees

www.episcopalmigrationministries.org
Refugee Sunday · Planning Guide

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Beyond Refugee Sunday
Dear friends,

Thank you for your interest in Episcopal Migration Ministries and your support of refugees and immigrants. We are grateful that you are considering hosting a Refugee Sunday. It is timely that you read this guide, and even more timely that your congregation might host such an important observance.

There are more than 65 million people forcibly displaced in the world today, and of this number, more than 21 million are refugees: children, women, and men forced to flee their home countries to escape persecution and violence. Each and every one of these 21 million is a person with a story, with a name, with hopes, and with dreams. Each is a beloved child of God.

We are living in a time when the political conversation and media messages about refugees too often veer to the negative and dehumanizing. Into this challenging environment, we are called, as followers of Christ, to share the Good News of God: to be ministers of welcome and bearers of hope. To remind each and every one we meet - neighbors near, and neighbors far - of their belovedness as a child of God.

By hosting a Refugee Sunday, you not only stand with and support a cherished ministry of The Episcopal Church in a time of great need, but you introduce your congregation – and even your wider community – to messages of welcome and hope. You open up a world that many do not see. You humanize our refugee brothers and sisters; you proclaim that these are people with lives, and families, and stories, dreams, and names.

This guide provides inspiration, ideas, and suggestions so that you may host a successful Refugee Sunday, and even that this one day might grow into something bigger – something more exciting and Spirit-filled than you might have thought possible.

At any time during your planning, please feel free to contact EMM’s manager for church relations and engagement, Allison Duvall, aduvall@episcopalchurch.org, with questions.

We give thanks for you, for your ministry, and for your interest.

In peace,

The Rev’d Canon E. Mark Stevenson
Director
Refugee Sunday Overview

**What is Refugee Sunday?**
Refugee Sunday is a special observance that honors and celebrates the Church’s ministry of refugee welcome, teaches about refugees and refugee resettlement, and through reading of scripture, prayer, and reflection, inspires church members to take action in support of refugees, immigrants, and Episcopal Migration Ministries.

**How to Host a Successful Refugee Sunday**
As with any project or ministry, success comes from proper planning. We outline Why, Who, When, Where in the next pages, offering ideas, suggestions, and tips for every step of the process.

- **Why:** As Simon Sinek says in his famous TED talk, *start with why*. Why are you hosting a Refugee Sunday? Why is it important?
- **Who:** Begin by building a team, and leverage the gifts and skills that everyone brings to the table. Everyone has a gift to share.
- **When:** With your team, discuss and decide the best day to host your Refugee Sunday.
- **Where:** The most natural response to “Where?” is “Well, our church, of course!” But, we encourage you to explore with your team opportunities to bring your church out into the world on this special day. Perhaps explore partnership with other congregations – including those of other faiths – to make the day even more meaningful.
Before Refugee Sunday – Planning

Why a Refugee Sunday?

Why are you hosting a Refugee Sunday? Why is it important?

As you gather your team, begin your work together by getting clear on your “Why.” Often, the response to “Why?” will bring up amazing and powerful stories – of family experiences and memories, of work for justice and peace, of eyes opened and hearts transformed.

Listen to these stories of “Why?” and make note of what you feel. What moves you? What inspires you? How does the storyteller connect their personal story to our call to welcome refugees? How does the storyteller connect the story to his/her faith?

Capture these stories and encourage the storytellers.

These stories could be told on Refugee Sunday – in social media leading up to the day, in an Adult Forum, as a sermon illustration, or as an additional message if you include announcements as part of your regular worship.

For messaging and storytelling resources, we recommend these Welcoming America toolkits:

America Needs All of Us | Neighbors Together | Stand Together | Stronger Together

Who: Gather Your Team

A Refugee Sunday should be a special, carefully planned, and thoughtful day that raises awareness of refugees and EMM, connects the ministry of welcome to scripture and the Christian life, and offers people meaningful ways to take action.

Begin by gathering your team.

We recommend between three and five team members, and the following roles:

- Liturgy planner – Lay or clergy; this person coordinates with clergy and lay worship leaders to incorporate special prayers and messages into the day’s worship
- Speaker(s) – To make an announcement during the worship service(s), and/or to make a presentation during an Adult Forum or Coffee Hour
- Social media/webpage manager(s) – Using graphics and sample copy provided by EMM, social media/webpage manager(s) create online event(s), promote Refugee Sunday on church website, and post to such platforms as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
When: Choosing a Meaningful Day for Refugee Sunday

A Refugee Sunday is an observance that a congregation may host at any time of year; scripture is full of stories and parables that highlight God’s commandment to welcome the stranger.

Certain times of year provide additional inspiration and interest, including:

- Epiphany Sunday, and the Season after Epiphany – Epiphany marks the revelation, or Epiphany, of Jesus the Messiah to the Gentiles, a story found in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 2. It is also in Matthew 2 that we read of King Herod’s murderous campaign to try to kill the baby Jesus, an event known as the Massacre of the Innocents. The Holy Family fled to Egypt, becoming refugees, to escape this political violence.
- Christ the King Sunday, Last Sunday after Pentecost, Year A, RCL – Proper 29 from the Revised Common Lectionary, Year A, for Christ the King Sunday includes Matthew 25:31-40, the famous “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” verse when Jesus explains that, “When the Son of Man comes in his glory… he will separate people from one another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”
- Sunday closest to July 13, Proper 10, Year C, RCL – Proper 10 from the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C, includes Luke’s Parable of the Good Samaritan. This memorable parable challenges us, today, to as ourselves, “Who is my neighbor?”

World Refugee Day, recognized internationally on June 20, also offers a timely opportunity to host a Refugee Sunday in June.

Where: Taking Worship into the World

Refugee Sunday certainly can and should be celebrated and acknowledged, in some way, within the context of your worshipping community’s life and schedule. For some congregations, this means that the day will be acknowledged within worship services.

In addition to the worship service, we encourage you work with your team to think creatively about how Refugee Sunday might be a time to take church into the streets, to connect with your neighbors, and to invite the wider community into this important and celebratory day.

Questions to ponder:

- What other groups might partner with you for Refugee Sunday?
- What public spaces – like parks, memorials, or other gathering points – might offer space for this kind of prayerful gathering?
- What opportunities are there to extend Refugee Sunday beyond the context of worship? With whom can you connect and partner - refugee or immigrant-serving organizations, neighbors from other faith communities?
Components of Refugee Sunday

Refugee Sunday, at its most basic, is a day to:

- Support Episcopal Migration Ministries, The Episcopal Church’s ministry of refugee welcome;
- Learn about the global refugee crisis and refugee resettlement; and,
- Pray for, honor, and celebrate the strength, resilience, and courage of refugees everywhere.

Beyond these three basic goals, how you celebrate Refugee Sunday is up to your team. Be creative and have fun!

Worship Service

When your team selects the best day to host Refugee Sunday, we recommend you review the readings appointed for that day. Most Episcopal congregations follow the Revised Common Lectionary, which can be found at www.lectionarypage.net.

In addition to selecting a day with relevant readings, we recommend that you consider:

- Hymns that connect to themes of welcome, service, peace, and justice;
- A Sermon that combines scripture reflection, storytelling, and teaching about refugees;
- Special Announcements that highlight Refugee Sunday;
- Special Collection during the Offertory for Episcopal Migration Ministries; and,
- Prayers for Refugees, including these Prayers of the People for Refugees and Displaced Persons, written specially for Episcopal Migration Ministries.

We offer additional ideas and tips, below, but always welcome your new contributions! If you use a hymn we haven’t listed, are willing to share sermon notes or manuscripts, or compose new prayers, please let us know! Email Allison Duvall, EMM Manager for Church Relations & Engagement, at aduvall@episcopalchurch.org.

Hymns

The following selections are from the Hymnal 1982 (Hymn), Wonder, Love, and Praise (WLP), and Lift Every Voice and Sing (LEVAS), with themes and poetry appropriate for Refugee Sunday.

You may also wish to review The Hymn Society’s collection called Singing Welcome, Hymns and Songs of Hospitality to Refugees and Immigrants. It is available, by request, at http://www.thehymnsociety.org/singingwelcome.

Hymn 131 (Von Himmel kam der Engel Schar), When Christ’s appearing was made known
Hymn 132 (Erhalt uns, Herr), When Christ’s appearing was made known
Hymn 246 (In Bethlehem), In Bethlehem a newborn boy
Hymn 247 (Coventry Carol), Lully, lullay
Hymn 344 (Sicilian Mariners), Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing
Hymn 345 (Ellers), Savior, again to thy dear Name we raise
Hymn 469 (St. Helena), There’s a wideness in God’s mercy
Hymn 470 (Beecher), There’s a wideness in God’s mercy
Hymn 472 (Donne secours), Hope of the world
Hymn 478 (Monk’s Gate), Jesus, our mighty Lord
Hymn 482 (Slane), Lord of all hopefulness
Hymn 491 (Kit Smart), Where is this stupendous stranger?
Hymn 516 (Down Ampney), Come down, O Love divine
Hymn 522 (Austria), Glorious things of thee are spoken
Hymn 523 (Abbott’s Leigh), Glorious things of thee are spoken
Hymn 527 (Ton-y-botel), Singing songs of expectation
Hymn 528 (Rowthorn), Lord, you give the great commission
Hymn 529 (McKee), In Christ there is no East or West
Hymn 534 (Purpose), God is working his purpose out
Hymn 537 (Moscow), Christ for the world we sing
Hymn 538 (Lucerna Laudoniae), God of mercy, God of grace
Hymn 539 (Tidings), O Zion, haste
Hymn 550 (Restoration), Jesus calls us; o’er the tumult
Hymn 567 (St. Matthew), Thine arm, O Lord
Hymn 568 (Was lebet), Father all loving
Hymn 570 (Birabus), All who love and serve your city
Hymn 571 (Charlestown), All who love and serve your city
Hymn 577 (Ubi caritas (Murray)), God is love
Hymn 578 (Eltham), O God of love, O King of peace
Hymn 581 (Cheshire), Where charity and love prevail
Hymn 584 (Chereponi), Jesus, thou divine Companion
Hymn 585 (Bingham), Morning glory, starlit sky
Hymn 586 (Pleading Savior), Jesus, thou divine Companion
Hymn 593 (Dickinson College), Lord, make us servants of your peace
Hymn 594 (Cwm Rhondda), God of grace & God of glory
Hymn 595 (Mannheim), God of grace and God of glory
Hymn 597 (Jerusalem), O day of peace that dimly shines
Hymn 599 (Lift Every Voice), Lift every voice and sing
Hymn 600 (Bellwoods), O day of God
Hymn 601 (St. Michael), O day of God
Hymn 602 (Chereponi), Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love
Hymn 603 (St. Botolph), When Christ was lifted
Hymn 604 (San Rocco), When Christ was lifted
Hymn 605 (Sharpthorne), What does the Lord require
Hymn 607 (Llangloffan), O God of every nation
Hymn 610 (Blaenhafren), Lord, whose love through humble service bore the weight of human need
Hymn 616 (Es flog ein kleins Waldvögelein), Hail to the Lord’s Anointed
Hymn 620 (Land of Rest), Jerusalem, my happy home
Hymn 648 (Go Down, Moses), When Israel was in Egypt’s land
Hymn 666 (St. Bridge), Out of the depths I call
Hymn 668 (Burford), I to the hills will lift mine eyes
Hymn 671 (New Britain), Amazing grace!
Hymn 672 (Bangor), O very God of very God
Hymn 690 (Cwm Rhondda), Guide me, O thou great Jehovah
Hymn 714 (Shalom chaverim), Shalom, my friends

WLP 721 (Ton-y-botel), Signs of endings all around us
WLP 722 (Sterling), The desert shall rejoice
WLP 723 (Samanthra), Isaiah the prophet has written
WLP 739 (Nueva Creación), Camina, pueblo de Dios, Walk on, O people of God
WLP 746 (Sandria), God the sculptor of the mountains
WLP 747 (Urbs beata), God the sculptor of the mountains
WLP 756 (Doris M. Akers), Lead me, guide me
WLP 757 (Mary Alexandra), Will you come and follow me
WLP 778 (Nyland), We are all one in mission
WLP 780 (Abbott’s Leigh), Lord, you give the great commission
WLP 782 (Abbott’s Leigh), Gracious Spirit, give your servants
WLP 786 (Styahanba), We are marching in the light
WLP 788 (Alexandra), As newborn stars were stirred
WLP 789 (Peace), Peace among earth’s peoples
WLP 790 (Peta), Put peace into each other’s hands
WLP 791 (David Haas), Peace before us
WLP 792 (Martin’s Song), Holy God, you raise up prophets
WLP 795 (O-so-so), Come now, Prince of Peace
WLP 796 (Unidos), Unidos, Together
WLP 800 (Thomas Dorsey), Precious Lord, take my hand
WLP 802 (El Camino), Cuando el pobre nada tiene, When the poor one who has nothing
WLP 805 (Negro Spiritual), I want Jesus to walk with me
WLP 811 (Bob Dufford, SJ), You shall cross the barren desert
WLP 812 (Daniel L. Schutte), I, the Lord of sea and sky
WLP 815 (Audi, Israel), Jesus said: The first commandment is this
WLP 827 (Jacques Berthier), O Lord hear my prayr

LEVAS 9 (American Melody), On Jordan’s Stormy Banks
LEVAS 19 (American Folk Song, Wayfaring Stranger
LEVAS 58 (Lillian Bouknight), The Lord Is My Light
LEVAS 61 (Noel Dexter), The Right Hand of God
LEVAS 70 (Negro Spiritual), I Want Jesus To Walk With Me
LEVAS 79 (Charles Wesley), Jesus, Lover of My Soul
LEVAS 182 (Negro Spiritual), Didn’t My Lord Deliver Daniel?
LEVAS 187 (W.B. Stevens), Farther Along
LEVAS 191 (Charles H. Gabriel), His Eye Is on the Sparrow
LEVAS 200 (Charles A. Tindley), Stand by Me
LEVAS 202 (Hezekiah Brinson, Jr.), The Church of God
**Sermon**

While preaching on the appointed readings for the day, the homilist may also wish to draw connections to other parts of holy scripture.

“What does the Bible say about refugees? God’s people in Old Testament days carried out a tradition rich in generosity towards sojourners, strangers and aliens. A hospitality code is even stated in Leviticus, as an integral part of the word of the Lord to his people. We also find that Abraham and David were sojourners some point in their lives…that Joseph and Ruth had to adjust to new cultures foreign to them…and that many of the Psalms reflect dire human needs for the refugee.

In the New Testament several related themes recur: for example, love for our Savior, love for our neighbor and trust in God’s care. Refugee ministry involves all three of these, and more. Indeed, the Bible shows us that we choose to act in love and compassion because of who we are as Christians. God’s word also shows us the source of strength and wisdom for every ministry we carry out in His name.”

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**Genesis 12:1** Abraham becomes a sojourner.

**Genesis 37:27-36** Joseph is sold into Egypt but learns to adjust to the new culture.

**Exodus 23:9** "You shall not oppress a stranger, you know the heart of a stranger, for you were a stranger in the land of Egypt."

**Deuteronomy 8:18** "You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth." (God is the source of what we have materially.)

**Deuteronomy 10:18-19** "He executes justice for the fatherless, the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore; for you were sojourner in the land of Egypt."

**Psalm 61:1-3** "Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to thee, when my heart is faint. Lead thou me to the rock that is higher than I; for thou art my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy."

**Job 31:32** "The sojourner has not lodged in the street; I have opened my doors to the wayfarer."

**Psalm 2:12** "Blessed are all who take refuge in Him."

**Psalm 46:1** "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

**Psalm 57:1** "Be merciful to me, O God, for in thee my soul takes refuge."

**Psalm 61:1-3** "Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to thee, when my heart is faint. Lead thou me to the rock that is higher than I; for thou art my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy."

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1 https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/article/refugee-sunday-worship-resources

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Psalms 146:9 "The Lord watches over the sojourners, he upholds the widow and the fatherless; but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin."

Proverbs 24: 11-12 "Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, "Behold, we did not know this, does He who weighs the heart perceive it?"

Proverbs 31:8-9 "Open your mouth for the dumb, for the rights of all who are left desolate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, maintain the rights of the poor and needy."

Isaiah 1:10 "...you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the rock of your refuge.

Isaiah 58: 6-9 "Is not this the fast I choose; to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?...to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house?... Then shall your light break forth like the dawn..."

Isaiah 61: 1-3 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted, he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

Zechariah 7: 9-10 "thus says the Lord of hosts, render true judgements, show kindness and mercy each to his brother, do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor..."

Matthew 2: 14 Joseph, Mary, and Jesus flee to Egypt.

Matthew 14: 13-21 Jesus takes loaves and two fish—and feeds more than five thousand people.

Matthew 25: 31-46 "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Luke 10: 25-37 The parable of the Good Samaritan. Here our Lord even chooses a stranger, a Samaritan, as our role model for actions of love.

Luke 14: 13-14 "When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you."

Acts 8:26-40 Philip shows concern for the spiritual needs of a foreigner.

2 Corinthians 8:12-14 "For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he has not. I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that...your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality."

2 Corinthians 9: 6-15 "Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work."

1 John 3: 16-18 "But if any one has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth." The following list provides a sampling of verses that connect to migration, displacement, welcoming the stranger, and the two greatest commandments – to love God, and love neighbor.
Special Announcements

If your congregation has a practice of sharing announcements at an appointed time during worship services, we encourage your planning team to take advantage of this opportunity to further share your message.

Revisit the stories you shared with one another about your “Why” – why Refugee Sunday is important. Identify one or two people to speak during the announcements time, and encourage them to make their message a story that explains their “why” – something that is personal, emotional, and that draws people in. This is your Refugee Sunday testimony.

Following the testimony, explain Refugee Sunday and the opportunity the congregation has to stand with refugees – today and always. Here are some sample messages you can include in your own:

- Refugees are children, women, and men who are forced from their homes due to persecution and violence on account of who they are, what they believe, or the group to which they belong. They are people, just like you and me – with stories, hopes, and dreams. “Refugee” is an international legal category. It’s not who they are. It’s something that’s happened to them.
- There are more than 65 million forcibly displaced people on Earth today, 22 million of whom are refugees. Half of all refugees are children. It is the largest refugee crisis since World War II.
- Refugees are survivors. They’ve overcome tremendous hardship, faced horrors unimaginable to most of us. They are brave, strong, and resilient people. And they bring great strengths and gifts to the communities that welcome them.
- The Episcopal Church has been welcoming immigrants since the late 1800’s, and began advocating for and welcoming refugees in the 1930’s and 1940’s. At that time, the Church was galvanized to stand for refugees fleeing Nazi atrocities in Europe. Today, over 22.5 million children of God are refugees, fleeing terror, persecution, violence, and war. We are called, at this moment, to stand for them.
- Episcopal Migration Ministries proudly continues the Church’s legacy of immigrant and refugee welcome, providing welcoming services, education to communities, and advocacy for refugees and immigrants.
- This Refugee Sunday, we honor and celebrate the refugees who have come to our country (and state/community), giving thanks for the gifts they bring. We also give thanks for Episcopal Migration Ministries, the refugee resettlement ministry of our Church, which works tirelessly to support refugees in the face of great challenges.
Special Collection

Taking up a Special Collection for Episcopal Migration Ministries offers your congregation a tangible, immediate way to take action to support refugees and the ministry of refugee resettlement.

Checks may be made out to:

Episcopal Migration Ministries
815 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Gifts may also be made online at www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/give, or by texting RefugeeSunday to 41444.

Beyond this special offering, there are many additional opportunities to partner with and support Episcopal Migration Ministries, including becoming a Journey to Hope partner, hosting a Love God, Love Neighbor training event, and more. To learn more, visit www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/educate, or email Allison Duvall, aduvall@episcopalchurch.org.

Prayers

Refugee, immigrant, and welcome-focused prayer resources abound. Here, we offer a sampling:

- Prayers & Collects
- Litany for Outreach Ministry
- Prayers of the People for Refugees and Displaced Persons

If you know of additional prayer resources, or if you compose original prayers for your Refugee Sunday, we invite you to share them with us! Email Allison Duvall, aduvall@episcopalchurch.org.

Prayers & Collects

Collect for Ministry

O God, our great strength, help us to fix our eyes on you, trusting in your mercy. Help us to look into the world and discover that you are there, our Immanuel. Strengthen us as we hold out open hearts and hands to the stranger, to the homeless, to the lonely, to the broken in mind and spirit. Stir us with your presence, your strength, to the homeless, to the lonely, to the broken in mind and spirit. Stir us with your presence, your strength, and your love. All this we ask in the name of your Son, our Lord, AMEN.

Collect for Welcome

Heavenly Father, thank you for making us members of your family—"children of God" and "heir of heaven." Help us to extend the boundaries of our parish family to those who are without family, home and country. Stir us to make and live out our commitment to welcoming the stranger into our midst.
Help us to love those welcomed, to share our lives and to witness to them of your love for all of us in the person of your Son, Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord. In his name we ask this, AMEN.

Collect for Refugees
Holy One of Bethlehem, from your earliest days you knew the threat of death, the terror of flight, and the pain of exile. Today we know that so many – millions upon millions - flee for their own lives and for their children. The numbers seem so vast, the problem so great. It is easy to feel helpless. It is easy to forget. It is easy to ignore. Shake us from complacency and from resignation. Fill our hearts and minds with understanding and compassion for your children. Who are forced by persecution and fear to flee their homes. Remind us that each number is a name, each statistic a person - your child, your beloved. Strengthen our resolve; stir in us a spirit of agency and action. For you have blessed each of us with gifts to be shared in love for all you have create, gifts that may be used to welcome, to comfort, to befriend. Grant that we would listen for your call. In Your Holy Name we pray, AMEN.

Prayer for Migrants and Refugees [Source: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops]
Lord Jesus, when you multiplied the loaves and fishes, you provided more than food for the body, you offered us the gift of yourself, the gift which satisfies every hunger and quenches every thirst! Your disciples were filled with fear and doubt, but you poured out your love and compassion on the migrant crowd, welcoming them as brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus, today you call us to welcome the members of God's family who come to our land to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war. Like your disciples, we too are filled with fear and doubt and even suspicion. We build barriers in our hearts and in our minds.

Lord Jesus, help us by your grace,
To banish fear from our hearts, that we may embrace each of your children as our own brother and sister;
To welcome migrants and refugees with joy and generosity, while responding to their many needs;
To realize that you call all people to your holy mountain to learn the ways of peace and justice;
To share of our abundance as you spread a banquet before us;
To give witness to your love for all people, as we celebrate the many gifts they bring.

We praise you and give you thanks for the family you have called together from so many people. We see in this human family a reflection of the divine unity of the one Most Holy Trinity in whom we make our prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.
Prayer for Migrants [Source: Jane Deren, 2007]
For all those who see “home” and all it means disappear behind them; for all those who cannot see a home in the days ahead of them; for all those who dwell in daily insecurity; for all those who are weary and without a safe place to rest their heads; for all families in migration we pray.

May the image of the Holy Family fleeing oppression stay with us as we enter a New Year, and stay with us each night as we are blessed with returning to a home. May we also be blessed with compassion for those still weary, still seeking, still with so far to go.

Let Us See [Source: Rev. Enock De Assis]
Dear God, our journey through life is long and hard. We cannot make this trip alone; we must walk together on the journey. You promised to send us a helper, your Spirit. Help us to see your Spirit in those you send to journey with us.

In the refugee family, seeking safety from violence, Let us see your Spirit. In the migrant worker, bringing food to our tables, Let us see your Spirit. In the asylum seeker, seeking justice for himself and his family, Let us see your Spirit. In the unaccompanied child, traveling in a dangerous world, Let us see your Spirit.

Teach us to recognize that as we walk with each other, you are present. Teach us to welcome not only the strangers in our midst but the gifts they bring as well: the invitation to conversion, communion, and solidarity.

This is the help you have sent: we are not alone. We are together on the journey, and for this we give you thanks. Amen.

Prayer for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers [Source: Nouwen Network]
God, no one is stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care. In your kindness watch over migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, those separated from their loved ones, those who are lost, and those who have been exiled from their homes. Bring them safely to the place where they long to be, and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who too was a refugee and migrant who travelled to another land searching for a home.
Amen.

Prayer for Refugees [From Church of the Mediator, Allentown, PA, Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem]
God our Creator: We ask for your loving presence and for your peace to be with refugees in our local communities and around the world. Be with all who are in fear. Be with those whose lives and livelihoods are under threat, and whose religious freedoms are being compromised. Be with us as we strive to enact your will in our welcome and support of refugees. Be with those in positions of leadership, that their decisions may bend toward peace and not division, and that they might realize the power they hold to do justice. Give us all strength and courage. Equip and empower us to be witnesses to your love – as advocates and as servants, as ministers of welcome and bearers of hope, especially for those seeking refuge. In your Holy name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People for Refugees and Displaced People
Available for direct download [here](#); also available at [www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/educate](http://www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/educate).
Litany for Outreach Ministry

**Leader:** Almighty God, we give thanks for all your goodness. We bless you for the love that sustains us from day to day. We praise you for the gift of your son, our Savior, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. We thank you for the Holy Spirit, the Comforter; for your holy Church, for the means of grace, for the lives of all faithful and good people and for the hope of the life to come. Remind us ever to treasure in our heart all that our Lord has done for us. Enable us, O God, to show our thankfulness by lives that are wholly given to your service. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Help us to look with compassion upon the people of this world who live with injustice, terror, hunger, disease and death as constant companions. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** As your Son came to earth not to be served, but to serve I love, stir us by this love to serve the homeless, to open hearts and hands to the stranger, the lonely, the broken in mind and spirit, who come to these shores from foreign lands. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Preserve our nation that, rejoicing in and recognizing your many blessings, we may offer peace, comfort and protection to the troubled, the weak and the wary. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Preserve our nation that, rejoicing in and recognizing your many blessings, we may offer peace, comfort and protection to the troubled, the weak and the wary. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Above all, direct us to witness to and share your love and the eternal salvation purchased and won for all through the suffering, death and resurrection of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Cause us to recognize that we are all one family and grant us grace to show forth in our lives what we profess with our lips. Fill us with compassion for those in distress and take away the arrogance and lack of concern frequently in our hearts. Open our eyes to the many opportunities for giving help and instilling hope, and rouse us into loving action. Lord, in your mercy,

**Response:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Rejoicing in the fellowship of the saints, we commend ourselves, one another and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.

**Response:** AMEN.
Communications Resources

Communications around your Refugee Sunday observance should be about invitation – inviting people into an experience, a relationship, and a story. Inviting hearts and minds to be opened and transformed.

In the next pages, Episcopal Migration Ministries offers sample social media messages, sample webpage copy, and downloadable bulletin inserts graphics you may adapt and use for your Refugee Sunday observance.

Social Media Messages

Each of the three major social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter – function a bit differently. If your congregation does not use social media, it’s not necessary to make an extra effort just for Refugee Sunday.

However, if social media is already an integral part of your communications strategy, we hope these messages and graphics will help you highlight and promote your Refugee Sunday.

On Twitter and Instagram, hashtags like #RefugeeSunday help connect your posts to others around the same topic or hashtag. Instagram allows for many characters, so you may wish to add additional hashtags, such as #refugeeswelcome, #episcopal, #TheEpiscopalChurchWelcomesYou, etc. With Twitter’s far more limited character count, you’ll have to be a bit more economical with your text and use abbreviations as necessary.

On Facebook, we would love if you would tag EMM. In the text of your post, simply type the “at” symbol, @, and then continue typing “Episcopal Migration Ministries.” As shown in the image at right, a menu will appear and allow you to select the page you’d like to tag.

On Twitter and Instagram, Episcopal Migration Ministries is @emmrefugees.

We’d appreciate “tags” and “follows” on all three platforms!
Sample Social Media Posts

For each post below, add the relevant hashtags for Instagram and Twitter posts, as character limits allow.

Join us on Sunday, ______ to observe Refugee Sunday, a day we'll learn, pray and act to support refugees.

Welcoming refugees makes our communities and our country stronger. Join us on Sunday, ______ to celebrate Refugee Sunday. We'll learn, pray, and act to support refugees and Episcopal Migration Ministries.

On Sunday, ______________, [church name] will celebrate Refugee Sunday, a day we learn about Episcopal Migration Ministries and how we, as the body of Christ, are called to welcome our newest neighbors. We will honor the day with special music, prayers, and teaching about the global refugee crisis and what we can do to help. Join us!

People do not become refugees by choice. Refugees are men, women, and children forced to flee their homes on account of persecution, war, and violence. Episcopal Migration Ministries is the Church’s refugee resettlement ministry, carrying on a more than century-old legacy of Episcopal ministries that welcome refugees and immigrants. Join us on _______ to observe Refugee Sunday, when we will learn, pray, and act to support refugees.

When refugees are resettled in the United States, they bring with them tremendous gifts. They bring courage. Resilience. Determination. Welcoming refugees makes our communities and our country stronger. Join us for Refugee Sunday on _________, as we learn more about refugees, Episcopal Migration Ministries, and how we can help.

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 2, we read the story of when Jesus, Mary, and Joseph became refugees, fleeing the violence of King Herod and finding safety in Egypt. More than 22 million children, women, and men find themselves in similar circumstances today. Join us on Sunday ______ as we observe Refugee Sunday, and learn, pray, and act to support refugees.

Did you know that today there are more than 65 million people forcibly displaced from their homes? More than 22 million are refugees, and half of all refugees are children. Join us on Sunday, _______ as we learn, pray, and act to support refugees and our Church’s ministry of refugee resettlement.

Did you know that The Episcopal Church has been welcoming refugees to safety and hope in the United States for more than 80 years? Join us on Sunday, _____ as we celebrate Refugee Sunday. We will learn, pray, and act to support refugees and Episcopal Migration Ministries.
**Sample Webpage Copy**

*Feel most welcome to draft copy of your own, using text from other parts of this guide.*

There are more than 65 million people forcibly displaced in the world today, and of this number, more than 21 million are refugees: children, women, and men forced to flee their home countries to escape persecution and violence. Each and every one of these 21 million is a person with a story, with a name, with hopes, and with dreams. Each is a beloved child of God.

Join us on Sunday, _____, to celebrate Refugee Sunday.

We'll learn, pray, and act to support refugees and Episcopal Migration Ministries, The Episcopal Church’s ministry of refugee resettlement and welcome.

To learn more about Episcopal Migration Ministries or to make a gift, visit [www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/give](http://www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/give), text RefugeeSunday to 41444, or make a check to:

Episcopal Migration Ministries  
815 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

**Materials for Download**

Refugee Sunday  
Social Media Graphic #1
Taking Worship & Celebration in the World

In addition to observing Refugee Sunday within the context of worship, this special day affords an opportunity to welcome the wider community into your congregation’s life – or, in other words, to take the church out into the world.

How could you invite others into the good news of welcome on Refugee Sunday?

With whom could you partner?

Map Your Community

It is important to remember that you don’t have to “go it alone” when planning additions to your Refugee Sunday observance. With your team, begin by mapping the various congregations, organizations, and people who might be interested in working with you to host additional community events, or who should be invited guests to attend Refugee Sunday.

Are there immigrant or refugee-led or -serving organizations in your community?

What faith communities or congregations might be interested in partnering with you for Refugee Sunday?

Who should you invite to experience the Refugee Sunday celebration? (Neighbors, yes, and perhaps also your mayor, city/county council, local paper, etc.)

Event Ideas

In partnership with others – especially refugee and immigrant-led and -serving organizations – you can expand Refugee Sunday to be a celebratory event for the entire community.

The sky is the limit on what you could do! Here are a few ideas:

Community meal – a community-wide potluck where neighbors can meet

Outdoor “Festival” – an afternoon of outdoor events (performances, workshops, face-painting & games) to bring neighbors together and to support refugee and immigrant-serving organizations

Film Festival – host a viewing of a film about refugees, with follow-up panel or small group discussion
Refugee resettlement and welcome are topics of increasing public interest. If you plan additional events around Refugee Sunday, or invite the wider community to participate, here are some things to consider:

- **Capacity and safety**: If you publicize your event to the public, be mindful of your capacity and audience. You may wish to notify your local public safety officials and have a security presence on site.

- **A welcoming environment**: Create a welcoming space for all of your neighbors. If you host a meal or provide refreshments, we recommend that you provide vegetarian or vegan options, and refrain from offering pork, shellfish, and alcoholic beverages.

- **Media**: If your event is likely to attract media attention, please let us know. Episcopal Migration Ministries offers media coaching to prepare you to comfortably and confidently share your support for refugees and resettlement.
Beyond Refugee Sunday

Episcopal Migration Ministries is eager to get to know your congregation, and to walk alongside you as you discern your next steps.

There are many opportunities to partner with Episcopal Migration Ministries.

Additional Opportunities
Episcopal Migration Ministries is seeking partners for several new initiatives and dreams.

*Love God, Love Neighbor* is an intensive three-day training experience that equips participants to be ambassadors, advocates, and allies for refugees and the ministry of refugee resettlement. Offering by EMM and other members of the Presiding Bishop’s staff, the training explores the history of the Church’s refugee ministry, the global context and domestic resettlement, positive messaging, asset-based community development, racial reconciliation, justice, and healing, and much more. EMM is seeking partner congregations, dioceses, provinces, or organizations who will work with EMM to host this training in various cities across the country.

*Journey to Hope* is a program for congregations and groups who want to expand their support of refugee ministry beyond Refugee Sunday. Indeed, having hosted a Refugee Sunday, you are well on your way to being a full-fledged *Journey to Hope* partner! Journey to Hope partners enter a yearlong covenant relationship with EMM in which they promise to pray, learn, teach, and support our ministry. EMM, in turn, provides additional learning materials, guidance, and walks alongside the community as they discern how they might be called into this work. We are currently recruiting our inaugural Journey to Hope partners. Join us!